

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of providing object-based content to be reported in an external computer-implemented general reporting application, the method comprising:

providing a repository of business database objects from which object instances are able to be generated, which business database objects each have one or more attributes for which applicable data are able to be provided for a generated object instance;

receiving a user selection of one of the [[a]] business database object objects, wherein generated instances of the selected object have data for attributes of the object, having associated attributes, and displaying a view of the one or more attributes associated with the selected business object;

displaying, within the view, a plurality of business objects each having associated attributes, wherein each of the business objects has a defined relationship to the selected business object, and displaying within the view at least some of the attributes for the plurality of related business objects;

receiving a user selection of at least one of the displayed one or more attributes associated with the selected business object, and a user selection of at least one of the displayed attributes for the plurality of related business objects, ~~the selected at least one attribute to be displayed in a report generated in the external reporting application,~~ and adding the selected at least one attribute ~~attributes~~ to a business content structure of selected attributes;

executing a query of records in a database and retrieving, for each of the records that meet the query, attribute data for each of the attributes in associated with the business content structure; and

generating an output file that the external reporting application can use to generate the report, the report to include the business content structure and the attribute data associated therewith.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a business content design wizard assists in defining the business content structure.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the business content structure represents meta-data information.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising displaying a view of a plurality of business content structures and receiving a user selection of one of the business content structures to be included in a report.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[7]] 1 wherein the business content structure represents meta-data information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising defining a calculated field to be included in the business content structure, wherein the calculated field is associated with a

function that takes one or more business object attributes as input, and uses a formula to compute a resultant value for the calculated field based on the input.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the business content structure represents meta-data information.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the resultant value is included in the output file.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising persistently storing the business content structure in a database.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein the business content structure is stored as an XML document in the database, and wherein the business content structure attributes correspond to tags in the XML document.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[14]] 1 wherein the database query is an SQL query that uses the concept of derived tables.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the output file is an ActiveX Data Object Recordset.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein generating the output file that the external reporting application can use to generate the report further comprises transferring the output file to a reporting-tool-specific interface component capable of plug-and-play interaction with the external reporting application.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of providing object-based content to be reported in an external general reporting application, the method comprising:

receiving a user selection of a business database object having associated attributes, wherein generated instances of the selected object have data for the associated attributes, and displaying a view of the attributes associated with the selected business object;

displaying, within the view, a plurality of business objects each having associated attributes, wherein each of the business objects has a defined relationship to the selected business object, and displaying within the view at least some of the attributes for the plurality of related business objects;

receiving a user selection of at least one of the displayed attributes associated with the selected business object, and a user selection of at least one of the displayed attributes for the plurality of related business objects, ~~the selected at least one attribute to be displayed in a report generated in the external reporting application,~~ and adding the selected ~~at least one attribute-~~ attributes to a business content structure of selected attributes; and

persistently storing the business content structure in a database so that it can later be retrieved and used to generate an output file that the external reporting application can use to generate the report with current data.

19. (Currently Amended) Computer-readable medium with program instructions stored thereon that when executed perform the following functions for providing object-based content to be reported in an external general reporting application:

provides a repository of business database objects from which object instances are able to be generated, which business database objects each have one or more attributes for which applicable data are able to be provided for a generated object instance;

receives a user selection of one of the [[a]] business database object objects, wherein generated instances of the selected object have data for attributes of the object, having associated

attributes, and displays a view of the one or more attributes associated with the selected business object;

displays, within the view, a plurality of business objects each having associated attributes, wherein each of the business objects has a defined relationship to the selected business object, and displays within the view at least some of the attributes for the plurality of related business objects;

receives a user selection of at least one of the displayed one or more attributes associated with the selected business object, and a user selection of at least one of the displayed attributes for the plurality of related business objects, ~~the selected at least one attribute to be displayed in a report generated in the external reporting application;~~ and adding the selected at least one attribute ~~attributes~~ to a business content structure of selected attributes;

executes a query of records in a database and retrieves, for each of the records that meet the query, attribute data for each of the attributes in ~~associated with~~ the business content structure; and

generates an output file that the external reporting application can use to generate the report, the report to include the business content structure and the attribute data associated therewith.

20. (Original) The medium of claim 19 wherein a business content design wizard assists in defining the business content structure.

21. (Original) The medium of claim 19 wherein the business content structure represents meta-data information.

22. (Original) The medium of claim 19 further comprising instructions that when executed displays a view of a plurality of business content structures and receives a user selection of one of the business content structures to be included in a report.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) The medium of claim [[25]] 19 wherein the business content structure represents meta-data information.

27. (Original) The medium of claim 19 further comprising instructions that when executed defines a calculated field to be included in the business content structure, wherein the calculated field is associated with a function that takes one or more business object attributes as input, and uses a formula to compute a resultant value for the calculated field based on the input.

28. (Original) The medium of claim 27 wherein the business content structure represents meta-data information.

29. (Original) The medium of claim 27 wherein the resultant value is included in the output file.

30. (Original) The medium of claim 19 further comprising instructions that when executed persistently stores the business content structure in a database.

31. (Original) The medium of claim 30 wherein the business content structure is stored as an XML document in the database, and wherein the business content structure attributes correspond to tags in the XML document.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) The medium of claim [[32]] 19 wherein the database query is an SQL query that uses the concept of derived tables.

34. (Original) The medium of claim 19 wherein the output file is an ActiveX Data Object Recordset.

35. (Original) The medium of claim 19 wherein generating the output file that the external reporting application can use to generate the report further comprises transferring the output file to a reporting-tool-specific interface component capable of plug-and-play interaction with the external reporting application.

36. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a pictorial representation of the selected business object and one or more of the related business objects.

37. (New) The medium of claim 19, further comprising instructions that when executed display a pictorial representation of the selected business object and one or more of the related business objects.